

REGULAR MEETING – MANSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
April 25, 2011

Mayor Elizabeth Paterson called the regular meeting of the Mansfield Town Council to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Audrey P. Beck Building.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Keane, Kochenburger, Lindsey, Moran, Paterson, Paulhus, Ryan, Schaefer, Shapiro

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Paulhus moved and Mr. Schaefer seconded to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2011 Special meeting as amended. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. Moran moved and Mr. Ryan seconded to approve the minutes of the April 11, 2011 as presented. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Paulhus moved and Mr. Shapiro seconded to approve the minutes of the April 4, 2011 Special meeting as presented. The motion passed with all in favor except Mr. Ryan and Mr. Schaefer who abstained.

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

Omar Kouatly, Fern Road, urged the Council to address the ongoing problem property located at 76 Fern Road. It is Mr. Kouatly's understanding that the current owner of the bus garage has expressed an interest in giving the property to the Town. Mr. Kouatly recognized other residents from the neighborhood who were in attendance and asked that the Council review this opportunity for a change in the status of the property.

Judith Kucharski, Highland Road, requested an ordinance be enacted to prohibit dirt bikes and ATVs from being operated at least on smaller lots in Town. In a letter submitted at the last meeting Ms. Kucharski described how she and her family are unable to enjoy their property because of constant noise from these vehicles.

Youssef Kouatly, Fern Road, commented on how everyone in the neighborhood cares for their properties with the exception of the abandoned bus garage. Mr. Kouatly believes it is time for the Town to take over the property, remove the building and clean up the area. The land could then be sold as a building lot or turned into a park.

Sharry Goldman, Browns Road, submitted a petition urging the Council to reopen the request for proposals and recruit a developer willing to move forward expeditiously on an Assisted Living Facility. (Petition attached)

Carol Pellegrine, Clover Mill Road, offered congratulatory comments to UConn, the State Police, the University Police, Town Administrative Officials, Emergency Services and apartment owners for their efforts on Spring Weekend. Ms. Pellegrine feels that enforcement made a big difference.

John Saddlemire, Sheffield Drive, commented on the number of children currently living in the area of the Fern Road bus garage and noted that the current situation is an invitation for problems. Mr. Saddlemire stated that the neighborhood would be supportive of the Town's efforts to mitigate the situation.

Alison Hilding, Southwood Road, requested the Town engage the services of Gail Batchelder of Loureiro Engineering to advise the Town on drinking water and environmental concerns in the Hunting Lodge Road area. (Statement attached)

Betty Wassmundt, Old Turnpike Road, commented on the budget proceedings especially on the South Eagleville walkway and the new ambulance. (Statement attached)

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Mayor Paterson thanked Mr. Saddlemire for the efforts of the University to make Spring weekend a non-event and for all the help and cooperation provided.

IV. REPORT OF TOWN MANAGER

Town Manager Matt Hart outlined the history of the Town's involvement with the abandoned bus garage on Fern Road and noted that staff is reviewing possible environmental issues and options. A report will be forthcoming.

The Town Manager suggested the issues raised by Ms. Kucharski regarding the use of dirt bikes and ATVs be referred to the Community Quality of Life Committee and will also be reviewed at a staff level.

Ms. Hilding's concerns as outlined in her letter will also be reviewed at a staff level and feedback will be provided to the Council at the next meeting.

V. REPORTS AND COMMENTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Council members reviewed the factors that contributed to Spring Weekend being a non event this year including the actions of the apartment managers, the elimination of guest privileges in the dorms, the parking bans, the enforcement of ordinances and the timing of the weekend.

Mr. Ryan moved and Ms. Keane seconded to add an examination of the use of ATVs and dirt bikes in Town to the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Kochenburger moved and Mr. Shapiro seconded to add the appointment of a member of the Town Council to the Regionalization Committee. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. Status Report on Independent/Assisted Living Project

Mr. Shapiro recused himself from the discussion.

John Paul Benoit and Stephen McPherson of Masonicare discussed the reasons for the delay in the project including the worldwide financial collapse; the amenities to be offered; the site location; and the "aging in place" philosophy of the company.

2. Draft UConn Water Supply Plan

Mr. Schaefer moved and Mr. Paulhus seconded, effective April 25, 2011, to authorize the Mayor to co-endorse with the PZC Chairman Town comments on the University of Connecticut's May 2011 Water Supply Plan.

Motion passed unanimously.

3. Small Cities (Community Development Block Grant) Public Hearing – Housing Rehabilitation

Mr. Paulhus moved and Ms. Moran to schedule a public hearing for 7:30 p.m. at the Town Council's regular meeting on May 9, 2011, to solicit public comment regarding the proposed application to the State Department of Economic Community Development for funds under the Small Cities Program.

Motion passed unanimously.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

4. Fair Housing Policy and Resolution

Ms. Moran moved and Mr. Kochenburger seconded, effective April 25, 2011, to adopt the attached Fair Housing Policy Statement, to adopt the attached Fair Housing Resolution, and to adopt the attached Compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 Policy.

Motion to approve passed unanimously.

5. Neighborhood Assistance Grant

Mr. Ryan moved and Mr. Paulhus seconded, effective April 25, 2011, to accept the role as the liaison to the Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA) Tax Credit Program and to appoint the Director of Human Services to serve as the liaison to handle all Neighborhood Assistance Act matters.

Motion passed unanimously.

6. Lease Agreement by and between the Town of Mansfield, Education Realty Trust, Inc and Storrs Center Alliance, LLC

Town Attorney Dennis O'Brien presented an overview of the most recent draft which the Council will discuss at a future meeting.

7. Zoning Permit Application for Storrs Center Parking Garage/Intermodal Center

Director of Public Works Lon Hultgren reviewed the designs for the Storrs Center Parking Garage/Intermodal Center.

7a. Mr. Ryan moved and Mr. Schaefer seconded to refer the issue of the use of ATVs and dirt bikes, as expressed in the letter from Ms. Kucharski, to the Community Quality of Life Committee and requested a report from the Committee including a review of approaches used in other towns.

Motion passed unanimously.

7b. Mr. Kochenburger moved and Mr. Shapiro seconded to appoint Deputy Mayor Antonia Moran to the Regionalization Committee.

The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. QUARTERLY REPORTS

No comments

IX. DEPARTMENTAL AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

No comments

X. REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Personnel Chair Toni Moran reported the Committee continues to work on the draft Ethics Ordinance as revised by the Town Attorney. The Committee has completed their review of the draft and has forwarded it to the Ethics Board for their comments.

XI. PETITIONS, REQUEST AND COMMUNICATIONS

8. W. Bigl re: AARP Tax-Aide Program

9. G. Padick re: Proposed Revisions to the Mansfield Zoning Regulations – May 16, 2011 Public Hearing

10. Mansfield Downtown Partnership Invites Town Residents to Update on Storrs Center

11. Center for Land Use Education and Research re: Recommendations for Modifications to Include Low Impact Development Practices – The Town Manager will make sure all the appropriate regulatory bodies are aware of this information.

12. Water Supply Forum

13. Willimantic River Review, Spring 2011

14. Proclamation in Honor of Joshua's Tract Conservation and Historic Trust, Inc. – The Proclamation was presented to members of the Trust just prior to the beginning of the 4/25/2011 meeting

15. Proclamation in Honor of Earth Day

XII. FUTURE AGENDAS

The concerns regarding drinking water and environmental issues in the Hunting Lodge Road area, as expressed in correspondence from Ms. Hilding and reviewed by staff, will be added to a future agenda.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Paulhus moved and Mr. Ryan seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m.
Motion passed unanimously.

Elizabeth Paterson, Mayor

Mary Stanton, Town Clerk